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Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 01792 211308Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 SY-05 OPR-02 PC-01 /084 W
----------106385 211327Z /53
R 211127Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5978
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 1792

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PK
SUBJECT: KARACHI CONTINUES RESTIVE

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 1600 B) KARACHI 0826 (NOTAL),
C) KARACHI 0852 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: STILL UNSETTLED AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF PROTEST AND VIOLENCE (REFTEL A) IN REACTION TO THE MURDER/KIDNAPPING OF NINE-YEAR OLD TARANNUM AZIZ, KARACHI CONTINUES RESTIVE, WITH THE FOCUS NOW ON RELIGIOUS RIVALRIES. ON 16 AND 20 FEBRUARY, THE CITY AGAIN
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SUFFERED VIOLENT OUTBURTS AND , INA A PATTERN ESTABLISHED LAST WEEK, DEFINACE OF AUTHORITY STILL SEEMS PREVALENT. END SUMMARY.

2. CONGEN KARACHI REPORTS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NEW RIOTING IN KARACHI. THE TROUBLE BROKE OUT FEBRUARY 16 IN CONNEC-TION WITH A SHIA PROCESSION TO COMMEMORATE THE MARTYRDOM

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OF THE PROPHET'S GRANDSON. THE TROUBLE WAS REPORTEDLY BEGUN BY
HOOLIGANS, BUT THE EASE WITH WHICH IT SPREAD WAS A CARRY-
OVER FROM THE TARANNUM DISTURBANCES EARLIER IN THE WEEK.
CONGEN KARACHI COMMENTED THAT KARACHIITES SEEM TO BE
MANIFESTING THEIR TRADITIONAL PRIVILEGE AND HABIT OF
VENTING THEIR FRUSTRATIONS DRAMATICALLY,
REGARDLESS OF WHAT GOVERNMENT IS IN POWER.

3. ON 20 FEBRUARY, THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY, VIOLENCE
ERUPTED ANEW, THE RESULT OF SUNNI-SHIA RIVALRY. OFFICIAL
REPORTS SAY THAT SIX PEOPLE WERE KILLED
AND TWENTY-TWO INJURED. KARACHI REPORTS THAT THE TROUBLED
AREA IS NOW SEALED OFF, AND THEY EXPECT A CURFEW TO BE
IMPOSED. THE CONGEN NOTES, "THE SEVERAL DAYS OF
CLASHES BETWEEN SUNNIS AND SHIAS DURING THE PAST WEEK
ARE SAID BY OLD KARACHIITES TO BE THE WORST IN FIFTEEN
YEARS. MINOR TROUBLES OCCUR EVERY YEAR ON THIS OCCASION
BUT THEY DO NOT ORDINARILY LEAD TO FATALITIES NOR ARE THEY
PROLONGED."

4. WHILE THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA) REMAINS
IN CONTROL, GENERAL RESTIVENESS AND DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY
IS FAST FORMING A PATTERN. SPONTANEOUS PUBLIC VIOLENCE-
WHETHR FOCUSED UPON A KIDNAPPING OR UPON RELIGION--
IS INTERPRETED BY MANY AS A SIGN OF
DRIFT IN THE COUNTRY. WITH VIGOROUS POLITICAL ACTIVITY
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PROSCIRBED BY THE MLA (AND, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE PPP,
THOSE POLITICAL VOICES WHICH ARE HEARD REMAIN TAME AND
REPETITIVE), AND WITH THE MLA REGARDED BY MOST AS "SOFT",
PEOPLE IN KARACHI, AT LEAST, APPEAR TO BE RESORTING
TO GENERALIZED OUTBURSTS TO AIR THEIR FRUSTRATIONS.
PUBLIC REACTIONS TO EVENTS AS DIFFERENT AS THE KARACHI
JOURNALISTS STRIKE, THE MULTAN FIRINGS, LAST WEEK'S
TELEVISION WORKERS' BRIEF TAKEOVER OF THE TV CENTERS,
THE YOUNG GIRL'S KIDNAPPING, THE SHIA-SUNNI RIVALRY
FIT INTO THIS PATTERN.

5. FOR THOSE ALREADY PRONE TO CRITICIZE THE MLA AS TOO
LENIENT, THE NEW VIOLENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE MILITARY IS
GROWING INCAPABLE OF KEEPING ORDER IN THE STREETS.
THUS FAR, REAL POLITICAL EXPLOITATION OF
THE RECENT VIOLENCE APPEARS LACKING, BUT THE POLITICIAL
IMAGE OF THE MLA HAS SUFFERED.
HUMMEL

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NNN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MURDER, KIDNAPPING, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation Codes:
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Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KARACHI CONTINUES RESTIVE
TAGS: PINT, PK
To: STATE
Type: TE
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